UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/23083
26 September 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 26 SEPTEMBER 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BULGARIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward to you herewith (annex), the text of the statement by His Excellency Mr. Victor Valkov, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, on the situation in Yugoslavia currently on the agenda of the Security Council.

I would very much appreciate it if you would have this text circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Svetlomir BAEV
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Bulgaria
to the United Nations

Annex

Statement by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria on the situation in Yugoslavia

Bulgaria is most seriously concerned about the increasingly worsening situation in Yugoslavia. The dramatic events in that country, which have been taking a heavy toll in human life, give rise to this well-grounded concern on the part of my Government and the entire Bulgarian people. Our attitude towards the developments in Yugoslavia from their very beginning has been expressed more than once in statements by the President of the Republic, Dr. Zhelyu Zhelev, in the Bulgarian Parliament, as well as in official declarations of the Government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The events in Yugoslavia, which are getting out of control, paralleled by the disintegration of the federal structures of power, escalation of the armed clashes, the formation of armed units on a religious, ethnic, political or inter-ethnic basis, highlight the increasingly real danger of an all-out civil war. All this has exceptionally grave consequences. We have no doubt as to the connection which exists between the deepening of the crisis on the one hand, and the attempts aimed at a forcible redrawing of borders between republics and redistribution of territories on the other. Our concern is further aggravated in the face of the danger that the existing inter-ethnic armed conflicts may spread in borderline areas, or even spill over into the territories of neighbouring countries. There is also the possibility of massive emigration that could be triggered off in the process. These factors have a destabilizing effect on international peace and security, both on a regional and a far broader plane. We are justifiably alarmed about possible negative consequences for the democratic process and the deep-going reforms under way in Bulgaria. It is for those reasons that we support Security Council resolution 713 (1991) of 25 September 1991 as timely and appropriate. We expect the United Nations to take prompt and effective action concomitant with the revived international confidence in its peacemaking mandate. The crisis in Yugoslavia should be solved in a way that would provide for the peaceful future of all peoples of Yugoslavia, its neighbours and the entire Balkan Peninsula.

Regrettably, the hopes that Yugoslavia alone might find a solution to the existing disputes by its own internal means, have been in vain. It appears almost impossible now to find a universally acceptable formula to preserve Yugoslavia as a State in its present form. Armed clashes in Slovenia, and now the fighting in Croatia, have seriously questioned the impartiality and truly national status of the Yugoslav People's Army. Such are the bitter facts. In a nutshell, the question is whether the ongoing processes in Yugoslavia, related to the free exercise of the sovereign right of peoples to self-determination, including their right to secede into independent states, will develop democratically, through equal dialogue between the republics, or

whether it will involve violence and military pressure as is the case at present.

In this alarming situation, Bulgaria took an active part in supporting the setting into motion of the mechanisms of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. My country unreservedly backed the efforts of the European Community in seeking a peaceful solution to the crisis. The Bulgarian Government imposed an embargo on the export, re-export and transit to Yugoslavia of military hardware, armaments, ammunitions, equipment and material for military and special use from and via Bulgarian territory. We welcomed with hope and appreciation the cease-fire agreement and we believe that only its strict observance and the denunciation of the policy of faits accomplis may avert the further escalation of the fighting and the involvement of other republics in the conflict. We hope that full compliance with Security Council resolution 713 (1991) by all the parties in Yugoslavia will stimulate the creation and strengthening of the political will to seek a peaceful settlement of the crisis. Without such explicit political will by all the parties involved, any efforts on the part of the international community would come to little or no fruition.

The underlying principles of Bulgaria's foreign policy regarding the crisis in Yugoslavia, as set out by President Zhelev on 14 September of this year, are fully in line with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

We deem it extremely important to recognize the right of each and every people inhabiting the territory of Yugoslavia, without exception, to self-determination, including the right to sovereign and independent statehood. The implementation of this principle, in our view, should be done by peaceful means, by political compromise, and without revising by force the existing borders. The latter is absolutely inadmissable.

Bulgaria has never tried, nor will it ever try to take advantage in any way whatsoever of the present difficulties in Yugoslavia, and we will strictly keep this obligation of ours. Fully aware of the need to preserve the climate of confidence and good-neighbourly relations in the Balkans, we strictly abide by the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia. Such a standard of good-neighbourly behaviour should, of course, be binding for all. We also try to show maximum restraint at this moment of tension and unpredictability. Moreover, regardless of the high level of tension in our neighbour, Bulgaria has so far refrained from increasing its military forces along the common frontier. We reject most categorically the allegations on the part of certain quarters in Belgrade about some Bulgarian complicity with events in that country. Such allegations are totally groundless. They are completely at variance with the real facts and the principled position of Bulgaria adopted from the very outset of the crisis in Yugoslavia.

In conformity with these basic principles, Bulgaria stands ready to offer its active support for any initiative, whether launched by the world

Organization or on a regional basis, for seeking a peaceful, political solution to the crisis in Yugoslavia in compliance with the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe. It is our sincere desire to develop relations of friendship, good-neighbourliness and intensive cooperation with all peoples inhabiting the territory of Yugoslavia, regardless of how exactly they will choose to govern their own destinies.